

BOOK REVIEW

Childhood and Adolescent Diabetes

edited by Simon Court and Bill Lamb.
John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., England, 1997.
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471 97003 4.

Childhood and Adolescent Diabetes aims to share practical solutions to the everyday problems that confront children with diabetes and their carers. The book begins with a discussion of the aetiology and epidemiology of diabetes and the practical issues of diagnosis. This is followed by chapters dealing with diabetes in children at different ages. Subsequent sections cover diet, insulin strategies, acute and chronic complications, and growth and auto-immune associations. Other topics included are the point and purpose of clinics, the role of the paediatric diabetic nurse specialist, and specific problems relating to school, exercise, leisure activity, and within the family setting. The final chapter comprises a series of pictures and accounts by children and their carers of personal encounters with diabetes.

The first chapter gives a useful overview of the aetiology and epidemiology of diabetes, including coverage of prediction and prevention, but at a level of detail that is out of proportion with that of the rest of the book. While a selection of references is given at the end, the scientific nature of the subject lends itself to citation of references within the text.

The chapters dealing with diabetes in children of different ages cover common problems including school life, psychological management and BDA camps, through to alcohol and contraception. The discussion of the role of the paediatric diabetes nurse specialist contains excellent examples of practical approaches to education.

The detailed British Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (BSPE) guidelines for the management of diabetic keto acidosis (DKA) are included as an appendix to Chapter 13 and the less detailed preceding discussion therefore seems superfluous. The summary of growth in diabetes is succinct but I think that for those lacking a paediatric training the importance of growth charts and puberty ratings should be reinforced.

Chapter 20 is excellent and comprises stories, pictures and excerpts from parents

and children. In a few pages it details a number of worries and concerns that would otherwise only be envisaged after much experience.

There is a useful appendix which collects together a number of addresses of medical, nursing, commercial and voluntary agencies associated with diabetes.

I was sceptical as to whether the book would fulfil its aim to be useful to all members of a diabetes team, but it does. What appears initially to be a discrepancy in the depth of coverage of some subjects enhances its appeal to different members of the team. This book contains answers to so many of the questions that parents and children have asked me and which I have struggled to answer. It should certainly be essential reading for SHOs and specialist registrars involved in the care of children and adolescents with diabetes, particularly those whose training is essentially in adult medicine.

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